

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims, in which text to be added is underlined and text to be deleted is stricken through, will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-36. Cancelled.

37. (Currently amended) A method of verifying the orientation of a valve prosthesis within a delivery apparatus prior to introduction into a patient, the valve prosthesis and delivery apparatus associated with packaging material, the method comprising the steps of:

providing the valve prosthesis loaded within the delivery apparatus, the delivery apparatus having a proximal end and a distal end adapted for insertion into a body vessel of a patient, and the valve prosthesis having first and second ends, a leaflet structure defining an orifice at the first end and extending from the orifice toward the second end such that the leaflet structure is configured to catch retrograde blood flow, and an imageable structure comprising first and second imageable elements located about the orifice;

imaging the delivery apparatus and the valve prosthesis using an external imaging system to determine a location of the imageable structure relative to the distal end of the delivery apparatus;

determining the orientation of the valve prosthesis within the delivery apparatus relative to the distal end of the delivery apparatus using the determined location of the imageable structure; and

verifying that the determined orientation of the valve prosthesis is indicative of a delivery approach specified by indicia located on at least one of the delivery apparatus, the valve prosthesis, and the packaging material thereof;

wherein a determined orientation in which the orifice of the valve prosthesis

is located closest to the distal end of the delivery apparatus such that the leaflet structure extends away from the orifice and away from the distal end of the delivery device is indicative of an ascending delivery approach, and

wherein a determined orientation in which the second end of the valve prosthesis is located closest to the distal end of the delivery apparatus such that the leaflet structure extends away from the orifice and toward the distal end of the delivery device is indicative of a descending delivery approach.

38. (New) The method of claim 37, wherein each of the first and second imageable elements comprises a radiopaque material.

39. (New) The method of claim 37, wherein each of the first and second imageable elements comprises an ultrasonically reflective surface.

40. (New) The method of claim 37, wherein at least one of the first and second imageable elements defines a first shape when viewed in a first profile and a second shape when viewed in a second profile different from the first profile, each of the first and second shapes being configured such that they are indicative of a particular orientation of the orifice to a viewer while under radiographic observation.

41. (New) The method of claim 37, wherein the leaflet structure is attached to a support structure.

42. (New) The method of claim 41, wherein each of the first and second imageable elements is attached to the support structure.

43. (New) The method of claim 41, wherein each of the first and second imageable elements comprises a cannula attached to the support structure.

44. (New) The method of claim 41, wherein each of the first and second imageable elements comprises a layer of material disposed on the support structure.

45. (New) The method of claim 41, wherein the support structure comprises a plurality of struts, and wherein each of the first and second imageable elements comprises one or more struts of the plurality of struts configured to comprise a radiographic profile that is visually distinct from other struts of the plurality of struts.

46. (New) The method of claim 41, wherein the valve prosthesis further comprises a covering material attached to the support structure and enclosing one of the first and second imageable elements.

47. (New) The method of claim 41, wherein the support structure comprises a frame having first and second coiled bends and wherein each of the first and second imageable elements comprises a radiopaque element disposed within one of the first and second coiled bends.